Red-backed Fairy-wren

Storr (1984, *Rec. West. Aust. Mus.* Supp. no. 16: 51) reported the first known occurrence of the Red-backed Fairy-wren (*Malurus melanocephalus*) for the Pilbara — an isolated population discovered by John Darnell in coastal low scrub and tall grass on dunes about Cape Keraudren. On 24 February 1986 I collected a nuptial-plumaged male (WAM A20233) at Cape Keraudren. It has a deep red back and short tail as in the subspecies *cruentatus* which ranges across tropical northern Australia from the Kimberley to Cape York Peninsula. The only other subspecies, nominate *melanocephalus*, has an orange back in the male and a long tail, and occurs in coastal eastern Australia from north-eastern Queensland to north-eastern New South Wales (Schodde 1982, *The Fairy Wrens*: 102-107).

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— JULIAN FORD, Western Australian Institute of Technology, Kent Street, Bentley, W.A. 6102

Turtle egg predation by the Golden Bandicoot (*Isoodon auratus*) on Barrow Island — In Australia sea turtle eggs are taken by several terrestrial predators including varanid lizards, foxes, dingoes, pigs and humans (Limpus 1982). On Barrow Island, off the Pilbara coast of Western Australia, the Perentie *Varanus giganteus* is believed to be the major predator of turtle eggs (Green *et al.* 1986, and pers. obs).

During visits to the turtle nesting beaches on the west coast of Barrow Island in November 1985 and 1986, I observed the Golden Bandicoot (*Isoodon auratus*) eating Green Turtle (*Chelonia mydas*) eggs. The eggs were taken either during the egg laying process, with the bandicoot descending into the nesting chamber (45 cm deep) and eating the eggs as they were laid, or when the nests were dug up by the bandicoots following the nesting process. Bandicoots were commonly seen on the beaches at night and nesting turtles usually had one or two bandicoots in attendance waiting to consume the eggs. In one instance one bandicoot consumed 6 out of 42 eggs and in another nest 10 out of 60 eggs were consumed by 2 bandicoots. In this latter instance, one of the bandicoots was killed when the turtle covered in the nest and trapped the bandicoot in the nesting chamber.

These observations suggest that the Golden Bandicoot is a significant predator of turtle eggs on Barrow Island, and their actions in digging up turtle nests probably also permits easier daytime predation of the remaining eggs by sea birds and perenties. Exposed eggs would also be killed by the high daytime temperatures. It was also interesting to observe occasional water rats (*Hydromys chrysogaster*) on the beaches at night, and these too may predate turtle eggs.

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— K.D. MORRIS, Department of Conservation & Land Management, P.O. Box 835, Karratha.

Banded Southern Giant Petrel recovered on Rottnest Island — On 8 July 1986 I found 2 dead Southern Giant Petrels *Macronectes giganteus* on the beach at the east end of Salmon Bay, Rottnest Island. One of the birds was freshly dead and the other had been dead for 2 or 3 days and been fed on by Silver Gulls *Larus novaehollandiae* and Australian Ravens *Corvus coronoides*. The latter Petrel was carrying a metal band numbered V03556 (Brazil). The Brazilian Banding Authorities informed me that the bird had been banded at Stinker Point, Elephant Island in the South Shetland Islands (61 ° 20'S, 55 ° 20' W) on 24 January 1986 and was a nestling of unknown sex. The bird had travelled about 14,000 km in around 160 days.

During late June and early July there were a number of reports of Southern Giant Petrels on beaches around Perth and I saw another Southern Giant Petrel about 30 m off Jubilee Point, Rottnest Island on 17 July 1986. This bird was chased off the water by a group of 6 Silver Gulls. It circled low over the water and settled back near its take-off point. Next day, there was another bird (or the same individual) about 50 m off the beach in Thomson Bay, Rottnest Island, half way between the Army Jetty and Philip Point.

— DENIS SAUNDERS, CSIRO Wildlife and Rangelands Research, Clayton Road, Helena Valley, 6056

First record of Leaden Flycatcher for South-western Australia — The Leaden Flycatcher *Myiagra rubecula* is an eastern coastal and tropical northern Australian species that has never been recorded in south-western Australia. Consequently, I was surprised to observe a lone male for two days on my farm at Cuthbert, 5 km west of Albany. He was first noticed on 7 December 1984 in a patch of *Agonis* near the work shed. It called frequently and repeatedly captured insects from ground level to a height of 13 m. He stayed until just after daybreak on 8 December. A colour photograph of the bird was taken and submitted to Julian Ford who confirmed my identification.

This is the second myiagrid flycatcher that has recently been added to the avifauna of south-western Australia, albeit as a vagrant. Brooker (*West. Aust. Nat.* 1974, 12: 181) collected an immature female Satin Flycatcher *M. cyanoleuca* at Twilight Cove on 12 April 1973. Both species are breeding migrants to south-eastern Australia, departing north in about April. Brooker did not speculate as to how his bird reached Twilight Cove but it might have gone astray during the northward migration. The circum-